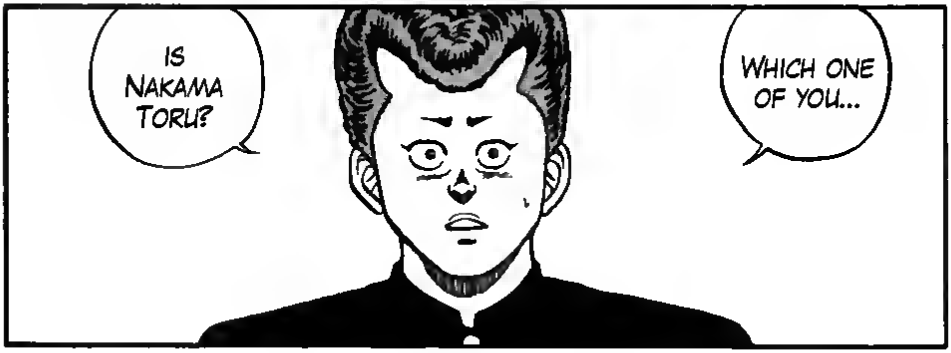
No. 70:
The Romantic Alliance Equation

AFTER SCHOOL...
SEE, THERE THEY COME...
HMM?

CUT IT OUT. HE CAN'T BE MORE THAN A WEE MIDDLE SCHOOLER...
HEY, HEY, YOU THINK THAT'S ANOTHER IDIOT COMING TO BEEF WITH US!?

THANKS ...

HMM?
I HATE TO BOTHER YOU, BUT...
UH, EXCUSE ME...


IS NAKAMA TORU?
WHICH ONE OF YOU...

What, you haven't been picking on middle schoolers again, have you?
You'll get yourself shanked!
Who the fuck are you?
Huh? Well, I'm Nakama, but...
So you're one of Kintaro and Shinpei's underclassmen...
Fifth middle?
...So what does a fresh punk from Fifth Middle want with me?
The name's Sato, and I'm a third-year at Fifth Middle.
Oh... My apologies...
I know this is rude of me to ask out of the blue, but...
Uh...

BREAK IT OFF WITH KISARAGI...?
CAN YOU...

WE SHOULDN'T BE TALKING ABOUT THIS HERE!
H-HOLD ON JUST A SECOND!
YOU SEE, I'VE ALWAYS...
HEH HEHHEH HEH...
WELL, AREN'T YOU FUNNY...

HUH!?

YOU'RE KIDDING ...
I'M SO LONELY...

GO THE FUCK HOME!
DON'T YOU DARE FOLLOW ME, HIROSHI...

SO... WHAT'S THE DEAL?
ENJOYING YOUTH, AREN'T YOU ♥
OHH, OHH! YOU KIDS AND YOUR YOUNG LOVE...
SO LAST WEEK, I MADE UP MY MIND... AND CONFESSED TO HER...
WELL, I'VE BEEN INTO KISARAGI FOR A WHILE NOW...
I WAS SURE SHE WOULDN'T SAY SOMETHING THAT'D PISS ME OFF, LIKE "CAN'T WE JUST BE FRIENDS?" OR "WHAT IF WE GO TO DIFFERENT SCHOOLS" OR THAT SHIT...
WELL, GIVEN HER PERSONALITY, I FIGURED IF SHE DIDN'T LIKE ME, SHE'D JUST SAY IT...

I THOUGHT I'D GO RIGHT BACK HOME, JACK OFF, AND SLEEP IT OFF...
AND IF SHE STILL SAID NO, I'D FEEL BETTER GIVING UP...
EVEN IF IT'S A LITTLE UNCOOL.
BUT SHE WASN'T STRAIGHT WITH ME AT ALL. SHE JUST KEPT MUMBLING TO HERSELF...
I WENT TO ASK HER FRIENDS...
AND SINCE I'M THE MORE IMPATIENT ONE,
BUT I FELT LIKE THERE MIGHT STILL BE A CHANCE FOR ME...
NOW THIS MAY BE CONCEITED OF ME,
AND HE JUST SO HAPPENS TO BE THE FAMOUS NAKAMA OF AITOKU HIGH SCHOOL...
AND THEY SAID THERE'S A GUY SHE LIKES...

WHY SHE WOULDN'T BE STRAIGHT WITH ME IF THERE WAS ANOTHER GUY...
SO I ASKED KISARAGI...
I FIGURED I DIDN'T HOLD A CANDLE...
QUITE FRANKLY, I GAVE UP RIGHT THEN AND THERE ...
SHE SAID YOU'D NEVER GIVE HER THE TIME OF DAY NO MATTER HOW MUCH SHE CHASED YOU AROUND...
AFTER THAT, SHE MADE A REALLY SAD FACE...
BUT I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO IT, BECAUSE SHE WOULDN'T BE CLEAR WITH ME...
I THOUGHT ABOUT GIVING UP COUNT-LESS TIMES ...

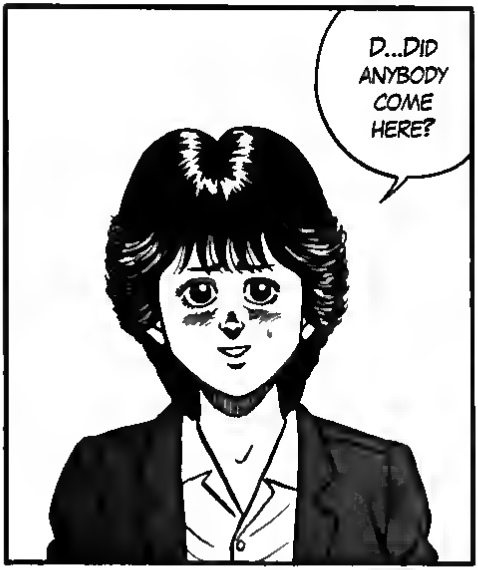
THAT IT'S STILL TOO SOON TO GIVE UP ON KISARAGI...
SO I THOUGHT...
TO TALK TO NAKAMA AND SEE HOW HE THINKS ABOUT HER...
THAT IT WASN'T TOO LATE...

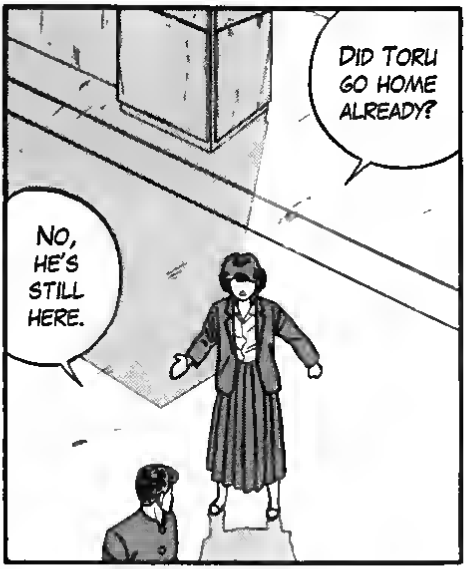
I THINK I'LL GO AND WATCH...
WELL, HE TOLD ME NOT TO FOLLOW HIM, BUT I REALLY WANNA KNOW HOW THE SHIT'S GOING DOWN...
OKAY, I'M GOING!

HMM?
HIROSHI!
AH!

OH, SHOKO...
WELL, THIS IS GETTING INTERESTING

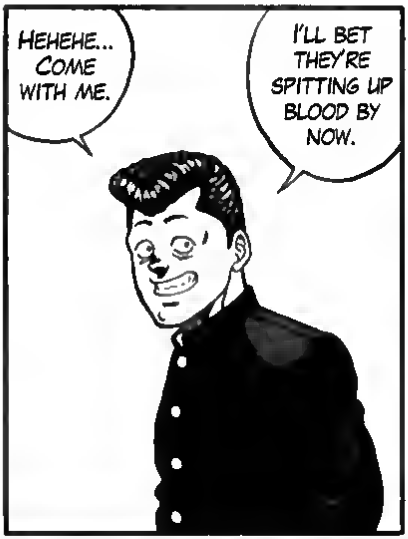
WHERE'S TORU?


D...DID ANYBODY COME HERE?


DID TORU GO HOME ALREADY?
NO, HE'S STILL HERE.

WAS THAT YOUR NEW BOYFRIEND?
YEAH, THERE WAS SOME FIFTH MIDDLE PUNK KID THERE...
HMM?
BUT HE'S NOT OUT OF THE QUESTION, IS HE?
HELL NO!
UHH...
YEAH? BE HONEST, KISARAGI SHOKO!
THAT YOU MAY AS WELL GO OUT WITH HIM, RIGHT?
I'LL BET YOU'RE THINKING THAT SINCE TORU'S BEING SO INDECISIVE...

HE'S PRETTY FUCKING HANDSOME...
TORU'S GOT NOTHING ON THAT GUY!


HEHEHE... COME WITH ME.
I'LL BET THEY'RE SPITTING UP BLOOD BY NOW.

ARE THEY STILL AT THE SCHOOL?
M-MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHERE DID THEY GO?

SOUNDS LIKE YOUTH TO ME...
TWO MOTHERFUCKERS THROWING DOWN OVER A GIRL... HUH?

I'M A BIT OF AN AWKWARD GUY MYSELF...
WELL...
SO I REALLY HATE TO DO THIS TO SHOKO...
BUT SHE'S PRETTY DAMN HOT...
IT'D BE A HELL OF A LOT MORE SIMPLE IF SHOKO WERE JUST SOME UGLY BITCH...
HE'S TRYING TO ACT LIKE HOT SHIT...
THAT IDIOT...

I'VE HAD MY EYE ON HER SINCE FIRST YEAR...
YEAH... SHE'S EXTRAORDINARY!
BECAUSE I WAS AFRAID OF HOW I'D FEEL IF SHE TURNED ME DOWN...
I JUST COULDN'T SAY A THING...
BUT I'VE NEVER HAD EYES FOR ANYONE BUT HER...
NOW, I'M PRETTY POPULAR, IF I MAY SAY SO MYSELF...

HUH?
THEN I GOTTA BE STRAIGHT ABOUT THIS, TOO...
WELL, IF SHOKO MIGHT CONSIDER YOU...
IT'LL BE A LOSS FOR ME, THOUGH...
IF I KEEP SITTING ON THE FENCE, THAT'LL ONLY HURT SHOKO MORE...
OHHHH ...
T...THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
REALLY?

I WAS GETTING CHILLS...
MAN, I WAS WORRIED ABOUT HOW THIS WOULD TURN OUT...
THEN AGAIN, I'M PRETTY MUCH THE TROUBLEMAKER IN MY HOMETOWN...
WHO WOULDN'T BE NERVOUS?
AFTER ALL, I'M TALKING TO THE FAMOUS NAKAMA OF AITOKU...
BUT ASK ABOUT "KABU FROM FIFTH MIDDLE" AND YOU'LL HEAR ALL ABOUT ME.
I MEAN, I KNOW I'M ONLY ON THE MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL...
THE PIGS HAVE BASICALLY GOT A MARK ON ME...

THEN PUNCH ME IN THE FACE...
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT SAY "SHOKO'S MINE, AND I'M NOT LETTING YOU HAVE HER"
HEY...
SO I WAS WORRIED ABOUT WHAT I'D DO IF IT CAME DOWN TO A FIGHT...
SEE, I'M THE TYPE OF GUY WHO CAN'T EVEN CONTROL HIMSELF WHEN I GET PISSED...
HUH?
I'VE GOT NO TIME TO LISTEN TO A BRAT THREE YEARS YOUNGER THAN ME TALK SHIT...!
ガッ
URK...

YOU TAKE HER FOR GRANTED, AND I'LL BUST THAT FLAPPING JAW OF YOURS!
YOU TAKE GOOD CARE OF SHOKO ...!
O... OKAY!
AHH! KISARAGI!
AH!
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The Romantic Alliance Equation – END

BE-BOP HIGHSCHOOL

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CHAPTER 70